

Core Content For Social Studies Assessment

Draft for Assessment Contractors

Version 4.0
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Kentucky Department of Education

Introduction Core Content for Social Studies Assessment

What is the Core Content for Social Studies Assessment?

The *Core Content for Social Studies Assessment*, Version 4.0, represents the content from Kentucky's Academic Expectations and *Program of Studies* that is essential for all students to know and the content that is fair game for inclusion on the state assessment. It captures the "big ideas" of social studies. Version 4.0 *Core Content for Social Studies Assessment* and the Academic Expectations provide the parameters for test developers as they design the state assessment items. These content standards and expectations provide focus for the development of the 2007 Kentucky Core Content Test (KCCT).

The *Core Content for Social Studies Assessment* is not intended to represent the comprehensive local curriculum for social studies assessment and instruction. It is also not the comprehensive *Program of Studies for Social Studies*, which specifies the minimum content for the required credits for high school graduation, and the primary, intermediate and middle level programs leading to these requirements.

The goal of social studies education is to help students become contributing, participating, and knowledgeable citizens. To achieve this goal, students must know, understand, and apply the content and concepts of the various sub-disciplines of social studies (government and civics, history, geography, economics, culture and society).

Kentucky Academic Expectations for Social Studies

The Kentucky Academic Expectations define what students should know and be able to do upon graduation from high school. These large goals were used as a basis for developing the *Program of Studies* and the *Core Content for Assessment*.

The academic expectations for social studies are listed below:

- 2.14 Students understand the democratic principles of justice, equality, responsibility, and freedom and apply them to real-life situations.
- 2.15 Students can accurately describe various forms of government and analyze issues that relate to the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democracy.
- 2.16 Students observe, analyze, and interpret human behaviors, social groupings, and institutions to better understand people and the relationships among individuals and among groups.
- 2.17 Students interact effectively and work cooperatively with the many ethnic and cultural groups of our nation and world.
- 2.18 Students understand economic principles and are able to make economic decisions that have consequences in daily living.
- 2.19 Students recognize and understand the relationship between people and geography and apply their knowledge in real-life situations.
- 2.20 Students understand, analyze, and interpret historical events, conditions, trends, and issues to develop historical perspective.
- 2.21 (Incorporated into 2.16)

How is the Core Content for Social Studies Assessment organized?

The *Social Studies Core Content for Assessment Version 4.0* is organized by grade level (grades end of primary – 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, and high school) in order to ensure continuity and conceptual development even though the current state assessment varies for those grade levels based on the content area. This is different from the current 3.0 Version, which is organized in grade spans.

Each of the five strands (Government/Civics, Culture/Society, Economics, Geography, Historical Perspective) is further organized around broad content statements called assertions that reflect the “Big Ideas” of social studies. These assertions are used across the grade level clusters (elementary--assessment at grade 5, middle level--assessment at grade 8, and high school--assessment at grade 11).

**16 ASSERTIONS / BIG IDEAS within
5 reporting categories**

GOVERNMENT & CIVICS

- People form governments to establish order, provide security, and accomplish common goals.
- The Constitution of the United States establishes a government of limited powers that are shared among different levels and branches.
- All citizens of the United States have certain rights and responsibilities as members of a democratic society.

CULTURE & SOCIETY

- Culture is a system of beliefs, knowledge, institutions, traditions, and skills shared by a group.
- Within different cultures, social institutions (government, economy, education, religion, family) respond to human needs, structure society, and influence behavior.
- Social interactions among individuals and groups assume various forms.

**ECONOMICS
GEOGRAPHY**

- Patterns on Earth's surface can be identified by examining where things are, how they are arranged, and why they are in particular locations.
- Earth is vastly complex with each place on its surface having human and physical characteristics; to deal with this complexity, people create regions.
- Patterns emerge as humans move, settle, and interact on Earth's surface.
- Human actions modify the physical environment and, in turn, the physical environment limits or promotes human activities.

HISTORY

- History is an account of human activities that is interpretive in nature.
- The history of the United States is a chronicle of a diverse people and the nation they formed. The history of the world is a chronicle of human activities and human societies.

Core Content standards under each assertion highlight the grade level differences. The Core Content standards are **usually** aligned across grade level clusters to show the spiraling curriculum of social studies where a concept is introduced in elementary school and further developed in middle and high school. The numbers may be different but the concept **usually** spirals.

What do the codes for the Core Content for Social Studies Assessment mean?

Within the document, each Core Content statement is coded. SS indicates that the statement is part of the *Core Content for Social Studies Assessment*. E, M, and HS (elementary, middle and high school) indicate the grade level by which Kentucky students should know this content for assessment. The number following the grade span letter indicates the grade match for the content statement. The grade level codes are:

Elementary	Middle	High
EP – end of primary	M6 – sixth grade	HS – eleventh grade
E4 – fourth grade	M7 – seventh grade	
E5 – fifth grade	M8 – eight grade	

The numbers in the code indicate the strand of social studies and its relationship to the assertions within a strand. For example, the first content statement of the first strand under the first assertion is numbered SS-E4-1.1.1.

SS-M6-5.3.1

SS Social Studies

M6 Middle, Sixth Grade

5 (fifth strand) Historical Perspective

3 (third assertion) The history of the world (ancient civilizations prior to 1500 A.D) is a chronicle of human activities and human societies.

1 (first statement)

Core content statements are **bolded** for “**state assessment**” or *italicized* for “*supporting content but not for state assessment*”. The intent is to show what core content statements are fair game to be assessed on the Kentucky Core Content Test (KCCT) and those that instructionally support the state assessed content, but will not be assessed at the state level. The content statements for the state assessment have been clarified with verbs to represent what students will be expected to do and to reflect the depth of knowledge and cognitive complexity expected for the state assessment. They are not meant to limit the cognitive complexity for instruction in the classroom. In order for students to perform at a high level on the KCCT, they need to have mastered the supporting content as well as the state assessed content.

Some Core Content standards contain additional information in parentheses. If there is a list inside with an e.g., preceding it, that means the examples included are meant to be just that, examples. However, if the list is not preceded

by an e.g., the list is to be considered exhaustive and those items are the only items that are “fair game” for assessment. As teachers use the *Core Content for Social Studies Assessment* to make curricular decisions, they need to incorporate all five strands of the social studies.

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